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of strategy articulation on public service performance in County Government of North Rift Region, Kenya. The study was supported by Institutional theory. This research was carried out through a descriptive survey method. The target population for the study was the employees of the County Governments of the North Rift Region, Kenya which was approximately 960 respondents. The North rift region counties include Turkana, West Pokot, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Elgeyo-Marakwet, Samburu, Laikipia and Baringo County. The sample size of this study was drawn using Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 formula which gave a sample size of 274 respondents. The researcher used questionnaire as the main data collection instrument. In order to ascertain validity and reliability of the research instruments, the researcher piloted research instruments in County Government of Nakuru, which was not be part of the target population of this study. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Both descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data. In descriptive statistics, means, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages was used. While in inferential statistics, regression model was employed. Data was presented using frequency tables. Findings indicated that strategy communication $\beta=0.389$, $p=0.000<0.05$ was predictor variable for strategy implementation practices on public service performance of County Governments in North Rift Region, Kenya. The study recommends to the county ministry through the chief executive officers to ensure that there is a good strategic articulation over the implementation practices because this enhanced improvement of public service performance

1.1 Background of the study

Performance shows how well an organization has utilized the resources at its disposal in generating wealth for the shareholders (Muiruri, 2015). Firm performance is the final result of a firm operating within the specified period (Mansour, 2015). Organizational performance is measured using several variables including: quality of service delivered, quantity of output productivity, research and development, level of absenteeism and annual turnover (Mbithi, 2016).

Across the globe, organization performance checks the efficiency of management in the utilization of resources entrusted to them by the shareholders in generating wealth within a given time period

(Worth, 2013). It is measured by ratios at different points in time to establish how well the resources of the firm have been applied in generating wealth. Different ratios have been applied depending on the purpose of the measurement. Ratios indicate if the firm is utilizing the resource at its disposal in achieving the objective set by the owners of a business of making them wealthier. The ratios are used to standardize measurement so as to enable comparison across the industry, same firm over a period of years or other firms in other industries (Chege, 2016).

In USA through the partnership with Government Executive magazine, recently surveyed more than 500 federal employees from dozens of agencies to

Abstract

Performance is an important factor that enables organizations to gain insight and understanding from its own experience and procedures. However, for effective implementation of strategic policies in organizations, it is crucial organization to identify and understand the key factors that influenced the success of strategic implementation initiative as these may have profound influence on the organization performance. The purpose of the study was to establish the influence

provide input for government leaders seeking to strengthen performance. The survey measured the elements that contribute most to organizational performance and also compared the results to private-sector benchmarks. For example, only 29 percent of General Schedule (GS) 12–15 public-sector respondents agree or strongly agree that they are consulted on issues that affect them, compared with 43 percent of the Senior Executive Service (SES) sample and 40 percent in the private sector. Just 34 percent of GS 12–15 public-sector respondents agree or strongly agree that they operate in an open and trusting environment, compared with 50 percent of the SES sample and 49 percent in the private sector. And only 34 percent of GS 12–15 public-sector respondents suggest they are encouraged to provide honest feedback to people within the agencies, compared with 51 percent of the SES sample and 48 percent in the private sector (Chopra, 2014).

The survey results suggest there is an opportunity to improve coaching and feedback in government. Only 29 percent of public-sector respondents agree or strongly agree that managers provide helpful coaching to develop senior-management capabilities, compared with 41 percent in the private sector. Similarly, the results indicate an opportunity to improve capability building: 36 percent of public-sector respondents agree or strongly agree that their agency provides on-the-job assignments to develop the capabilities of their senior managers, compared with 41 percent in the private sector.

There is also an opportunity to attract talent with the right skills and expertise through nontraditional channels. For example, only 22 percent of public-sector respondents believe their agencies recruit top talent from outside, either from other areas of government or the private sector, compared with 32 percent in the private sector. Only 40 percent of public-sector respondents agree or strongly agree that the government has a robust performance-management system, compared with 64 percent in the private sector. Just 38 percent agree or strongly agree that their agencies hold challenging reviews to evaluate performance against plans, compared with 56 percent in the private sector. And only 55 percent agree or strongly agree that they have clear explanations of what has to be achieved in their jobs, compared with 68 percent in the private sector (Stacks & Mizrahi, 2018).

Government leaders have an important opportunity to improve the public performance of their organizations by harnessing the passion and motivation of the federal workforce. As leaders shape their performance agenda, we encourage them to prioritize management practices that help them

engage the workforce more fully, strengthen talent management, and improve accountability (Bolton, 2018).

In UK, public service performance measuring and management in government has become almost ubiquitous over the past three decades. With the exception of some regional government controlled services, virtually every part of the UK public services produces publicly available performance data which has progressively started to play a role in central decision making. Considerable capacity to formulate, monitor and analyze performance information has evolved.

UK has been successful in developing a fairly comprehensive performance and evaluation measurement, monitoring, and management system which, over time, has become increasingly outcome focused, although at various levels it still includes large elements of output, process and even input monitoring. The British performance management model has largely been a centralized, top-down imposed one in which lower tier organizations are mandated either legally or administratively to produce performance reporting data. The Public Service Agreements System (PSAs) have come to be seen as the international model par excellence of the setting of performance targets broadly linked to the budget process and, therefore, as the pinnacle of the whole system (Katzenstein, 2015).

Organizations operate in a very competitive environment. To develop and sustain competitive advantage, firms practice strategic management. Vital administration comprises of the investigation, choices, and activities an association attempts with a specific end goal to make and support upper hand (Grant, 2016). It involves decision-making about an organization's objectives. Creating a brilliant strategy is nothing compared to executing it successfully. Execution is critical to success, without a carefully and well planned approach to execution; strategic goals cannot be attained (Njagi & Kombo, 2014).

In Africa, after decades of downplaying the role of the state in development, there is now a shift in paradigm and a rediscovery of the importance of the state in the development process and the need for a more capable public sector. The renewed sense of urgency for creating an effective public sector in African countries can be observed both at the continental level and at the national level in many countries, including Ghana. For instance, the 4th Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service, held within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in March 2003 in South Africa, agreed to a Pan-African Governance and Public Administration

capacity development program to strengthen the public institutions and systems of African states.

Public sector reform has also become a high priority for the government of Ghana. After a review of past reform policies, the Kuffour Administration (current government in Ghana) created a new department called the Ministry of Public Sector Reform (MPSR) in May 2005 to implement public sector reforms in the country. In sum, there is an active on going search in Africa and in Ghana for ways of creating effective, efficient and sustainable public sector reform strategy (Report of the World Bank Task Force on Capacity Development in Africa, 2005) (Mowforth & Munt, 2015).

Ghana over the last three decades, has undertaken several administrative reforms in the public sector, designed mainly to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to enhance productivity. In the area of performance management, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to establish an effective performance management culture that seeks to align objectives, targets and outcomes to organizational and national development goals.

Performance management processes in the South African public service are often perceived and implemented in isolation from other organizational and management policies, strategies, systems and processes. Public sectors have been stigmatized with poor service delivery leading to weak performance management. Given this context, the need for result oriented public service saw the birth of various public service reforms. Reforms are mostly about changing the way government work so as to return amongst others professionalism, meet up with citizens' demand, and achieve the goals and objectives of the government. The main factors leading to public sector reforms can be traced back to the following criteria, namely the redefinition of the role of the state, secondly, the introduction of new measures to enhance public management performance and lastly, the emphasis of governments to adhere to the principles of good corporate governance through increased transparency, openness, accountability and increased citizen participation (Keyter, 2007).

There have been three waves of public service reforms in Africa namely; structural reforms-experienced in the early 1980's; capacity building-experienced in the 1990's and the ongoing service delivery improvement which came into existence in the early 2000's (Mutahaba & Kiragu, 2002). The reason behind 2000's reform was the need to demonstrate early results, public demands for transparency and accountability, influence of new public management, the need to support sector wide

approaches, and an integrated systems approach. From the academics and policy practitioners perspective, much emphasis was laid on measures for enforcing the accountability of the governors to the governed through increased transparency, openness, and citizen participation (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015).

In Kenya public service performance has been improving over decades due to the reforms that are made by the government. Since the 1990's the Government of Kenya has been implementing Civil Service Reform Programs with the aim of reducing the Government wage bill streamlining and rationalizing Government ministries and departments, strengthening personnel and payroll controls and building capacity (GoK, 2007).

According to the Government Seasonal papers number one of 1986, 1992, and 1994 Government wished to refocus the civil service reforms to increase the pace of implementation in order to achieve better control of the wage bill, improve the balance of spending between operations and maintenance to promote improvement to service delivery. These reforms have represented significant policy shifts in the areas of staffing, Civil Service organization, pay and benefits, personnel management and training financial performance and management. Specific policy issues under each reform programme include: cutback management approach entailing cuts in staff through retrenchment and natural attrition, capacity building, service orientation and result based performance (Misiko, 2018).

A number of public service reforms have been initiated in the very recent aiming at placing citizen satisfaction at the heart of policy making and service delivery. Efforts under the economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) of improving public service delivery by strengthening the link between planning, budgeting and implementation; improvement on performance management as well as strategic management have been cited as some of the recent public service improvement Initiatives.

Increasingly, the Kenyan Government through its path to the realization of the nations' development agenda as enshrined in the First Medium Term Plan (2008-2012) and vision 2030 (GOK, 2007) realizes that an efficient, motivated and well trained public service is one of the major foundations pillar (GOK, 2007). The government has continued to intensify efforts to ring about attitudinal change in public service, service delivery orientation, skills inventory assessments, performance management, computerization of service delivery, as well as training and development (Kabiru & Theuri, 2018).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Public service performance is an important factor that enables organizations to gain insight and understanding from its own experience and procedures (Choy, 2011). However, for effective implementation of strategic policies in organizations, it is crucial organization to identify and understand the key factors that influence the success of strategic implementation initiative as these may have profound influence on the organization performance (Ichijo, Krogh & Nonaka, 2012). The Auditor General of counties has also revealed widespread misuse of public funds through ***-+weak financial controls and failure to properly account to spent funds in county assemblies (Auditor General, 2017).

The county governments of the North Rift Region have realized the crucial role of service delivery management in achieving its goals in this competitive world, but there have been laggards in the adoption of service performance strategy usually due to wait and see attitude of what was the true benefits and pitfalls from early adopters The critical challenges emerging in the public service performance system and the implementation of its strategies hamper the full realization of the benefits which include lack of uniformity among county signatories due to inconsistencies in application of public service, this negate the policy directives (Sigei, 2016). There is lack of adequate resources to coordinate and implement public service performance strategies within the county. These include financial resources to facilitate activities at various stages of the public performance process hampering efforts of training public officers on public service delivery and in general performance. The budget allocated is inadequate and there are inconsistencies and delays in releasing funds. There is a limited human resource capacity and expertise to effectively oversee performance contracting process (Korir, Rotich & Bengat, 2015).

The reward of successful public service performance integration is distinctively attractive and appealing to all citizens since the authorities will get full support from its residents and stakeholders. The guarantee of improved performance in all sectors within the county and national government at large was noticed. However, there exists an information gap in the rising economies of Kenya especially at county levels, for instance there is restricted hypothetical and exact survey about authoritative execution in organizations. This investigation accordingly contemplates to investigate connection between technique execution and the corresponding public performance in Kenya.

2.0 Theory and Hypothesis Development

Institutional Theory

Institutional Theory was postulated by Powell and DiMaggio (1991) and it states that the organizational structures and how they influence the flow of information plays an important role in strategy implementation. The multifaceted nature of revealing structure influences the way data important for procedure usage streams subsequently adversely influencing methodology execution (Scott, 2001). The arrangement of formal principles as far as approaches and strategies created in an association decides how the data streams and the activities to be embraced by staff if there should arise an occurrence of an episode of a specific sort happening (Jepperson, 1991). The theory assumes that these structures in an organization create expectations among different stakeholders in strategy implementation in an organization that determine how actions are undertaken thereby influencing final product of strategy implementation (Zucker, 1977). It seeks cognitive and cultural explanations of social and organizational phenomena by considering the properties of supra-singular units of investigation that can't be decreased to collections or direct results of people's traits or thought processes.

Institutional scholars accept that the institutional condition can emphatically impact the improvement of formal structures in an association, frequently more significantly than showcase weights. Creative structures that enhance specialized proficiency in early-receiving associations are legitimized in the earth. Eventually these developments achieve a level of legitimization where inability to embrace them is viewed as silly and careless (or they end up lawful orders). Now new and existing associations will embrace the auxiliary frame regardless of whether the shape doesn't enhance effectiveness.

Meyer and Rowan (1977) observed that institutional theories are merely accepted ceremoniously in order for the organization to gain or maintain legitimacy in the institutional environment. Organizations adopt the vocabularies of structure prevalent in their environment such as specific job titles, procedures, and organizational roles. The adoption and prominent display of these institutionally-acceptable trappings of legitimacy help preserve an aura of organizational action based on good faith. Legitimacy in the institutional environment helps ensure organizational survival (Greve & Teh, 2018). Scott (1995) commentates that, with a specific end goal to survive, associations must fit in with the standards and conviction frameworks winning in nature (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) Meyer and Rowan, 1977, on the grounds that institutional

isomorphism, both basic and procedural, will gain the association authenticity (Dacin, 1997; Deephouse, 1996; Suchman, 1995). For example, multinational companies (MNCs) working in various nations with differing institutional conditions will confront assorted weights. Some of those weights in host and home institutional conditions are vouched for apply basic influence on aggressive procedure (Martinsons, 1993; Porter, 1990) and human resource management (HRM) practices (Rosenzweig and Singh, 1991; Zaheer, 1995). Corporations also face institutional pressures from their most important peers: peers in their industry and peers in their local (headquarters) community; for example, Marquis and Tilcsik (2016) show that corporate philanthropic donations are largely driven by isomorphic pressures that companies experience from their industry peers and local peers. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social organizations can also be susceptible to isomorphic pressures.

Institutions set out in an organization determine what is acceptable and whatever that is not acceptable in an organizational setting. This therefore determines how employees carry themselves around when doing their duties (Mbithi, 2016). This theory is important for this study because it helps explain the role played by policies, procedures, laws and other internal restrictions on strategy implementation.

Empirical review

Strategy Communication

Bryson (2018) did a study on strategy communication for public and nonprofit organizations; on strategic communication, much of the research on strategy in the public sector tends to focus on the on the process role. A smaller proportion pays attention to the content role (Vining 2016) but tend to frame it in economic rather than broader terms. However, over recent decades, the content role became more important (from a lower base), but it augmented rather than displaced the process role, with the rise of public management interest in democratic deliberation, public participation, consultation, information-sharing and similar artifacts of democratic politics. Increasingly, public managers find themselves as initiators or responders, organizers, shapers, information-providers, advocates or devil's advocates in public deliberation processes. This raises normative questions as to the roles of public managers in democratic decision-making but more important for our purposes are its ramifications for strategy and strategy-making.

Andrews *et al.* (2017) elucidates the forms of strategy implementation in the public sector, the

study was concerned with strategy-formulation. In addition, whereas Vining (2016) provides a useful elaboration of how various analytic constructs might apply to aspects of strategy in government organizations, the study sought to compare how the various concepts might be put together as whole strategic frameworks, going beyond traditional public administration, New Public Management or collaborative network governance with public value as an anchor for this reconsideration. Thus, the study analyzes the antecedents and evolution of strategy-making, and applies them to two illustrative case studies. Using these categories, the study took each of the elements of NPM, and then of public value management, and assess how appropriate they are to the public sector. The study concluded that the broad categories within the BPM are applicable to the distinctive characteristics of the public sector, but the contents of those categories mostly are not. For example, both have to understand and deal with their environment, but their environments are made up of different types of actors the private sector facing a market environment while the public sector deals with a more political environment. By contrast to BPM, the public value framework is more attuned to the distinctive realities of the government sector. It therefore opens up a greater scope for action, and a framework for thinking about it.

Kimani, Kinyua & Wawire (2014) did a study on the influence of strategy communication in delivery of forestry services and the study found that strategy communication is a planned effort to maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics. In recent years, PR has been one of the prominent issues that companies have been addressing. Yet, few studies have investigated strategy communication influence on the delivery of forestry services. Using KFS, this study examined how PR affects service delivery. The results suggest that strategy communication has a role to play in building product awareness, creating interest, providing information and reinforcing the brand. The specific objectives of the study were; to examine how strategy communication influences building product awareness at Kenya Forest Service, to investigate how strategy communication creates interests for Kenya Forestry services and products, to assess the influence of strategy communication in providing information of forestry services and to determine the influence of PR in brand reinforcement at Kenya Forest Service.

Data was collected from a sample of 70 respondents through a survey. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents for the study. Interview schedule was developed and used to collect data from Heads of Departments and a set of

questionnaire administered to the rest of the participants. Statistical Packages of Social Sciences (SPSS) and Excel were used to analyze the coded data. The information was presented in figures and interpreted based on descriptive statistics. The study concluded that indeed strategy communication plays an important role in building product awareness, creating interest, providing information and reinforcing the brand. The study recommends that KFS should utilize strategy communication more efficiently to create more awareness to its staff, customers, stakeholders and the public.

Sefali and Bekker (2010) on the impact of the performance management system on accountability in the public service noted that the concept of a performance management system (PMS) is dynamic and controversial amongst both public management academics and practitioners. It has a variety of contexts, forms and purposes as applied and perceived internationally. It is worth-noting that the concept of the PMS is relatively new in the Public Service of Lesotho. However, the PMS has existed for decades as an administration and management concept internationally.

Findings were made after the analysis of the survey responses. Firstly, it was established that most of the public officials did not well understand the application of the PMS on their day-to-day work due to lack of training. Secondly, it was revealed that there was no evident commitment by the Government of Lesotho to properly implement the PMS. Thirdly, the study found out that due to a lack of incentives the majority of the public officials were not motivated enough to correctly implement the PMS. Furthermore, there was no clear evidence that the PMS enhanced accountability in the Public Service of Lesotho. In addition, the study highlighted the problem of outdated guidelines, forms and legislation related to the PMS. Finally, the study proposed that the Government of Lesotho should make more effort to revamp the implementation of the PMS. This effort should focus on, amongst others, the following; Intensifying training on the PMS and its practical relationship with accountability, Reviewing the PMS documents to be informed by the tenets of the New Public Management, Reorganizing Government institutions to fully participate and own and commit to the implementation of the PMS, Facilitating the introduction of the Performance Related Pay system (PRP).

It has been concluded that the implementation of the PMS has been handled with less enthusiasm, commitment and was not wholly embraced by all relevant stakeholders. The PMS related management tools such as strategic planning, job descriptions,

work plans and performance standards were not strongly emphasized during the implementation of the PMS. This lack of strong emphasis did not assist to enhance the PMS implementation. The above were identified as deficiencies that warranted prompt attention by the Government of Lesotho, particularly the Ministry of the Public Service.

Nyaguthii & Oyugi (2013) did a study on influence of community participation on successful implementation of constituency development fund projects in Kenya. The research findings revealed that there are inter-relationships between the various dimensions of the needs in society like security and economic growth. The findings further showed that curriculum in its current state does not offer enriched content and processes, that are engaging to create and transform the learner into a person with competencies that are in tandem with the ever changing national and global contexts. It was also indicated that the curriculum does not have a framework for identifying and nurturing talents. Inadequate infra-structure, instructional materials and teaching staff in learning institutions have hindered effective delivery of curriculum. Though quality teacher education and sufficient resources are key in supporting suitable pedagogical approaches, teachers are not well grounded in learning approaches that encourage participation of learners as they acquire desired competencies.

Further, teaching environments and teachers do not offer opportunities for a wide array of assessment that foster cognitive and non-cognitive competencies. In regard to emerging issues, the findings pointed out that their complexity and magnitude of their impact cannot be handled without organized learning experiences in both formal and non-formal settings. Improvements need to be made in terms of a curriculum that contextualizes the realities of needs in society so that the learners can relate what they are taught to their own experiences. It is recommended that the curriculum conceptualization and implementation should embody a learning environment that is well equipped and activity oriented to create supportive situations for the development of competencies for real-life or work related situations. Options for learning areas should make provisions that are authentic for the individual learners in their society, without necessarily marginalizing the nation from its development priorities and the pre-dominant global trends that are shaping education. The study recommends a more integral view of education that seeks synergies between inputs, processes and outcomes for the provision of a variety of teaching and learning resources in different formats, including use of modern technology. An alternative

to the present distribution of the capitation grant according to the number of children enrolled is also suggested. This will allow for additional support in the form of higher spending per pupil, especially where standards of education are low. In order to alleviate the pedagogical problems linked to quality and variety of teaching methods, teacher re-orientation and re-training is recommended.

Conceptual Framework

The dependent variable of the study is public service performance which was measured by levels of

satisfaction of citizens, performance contracting and the benefits on the economies of scale. The independent variable of the investigation was strategic communication measured by leadership skills, accountability of employees and transparency of employees.

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of strategy translation and public service performance of County Governments in North Rift Region, Kenya

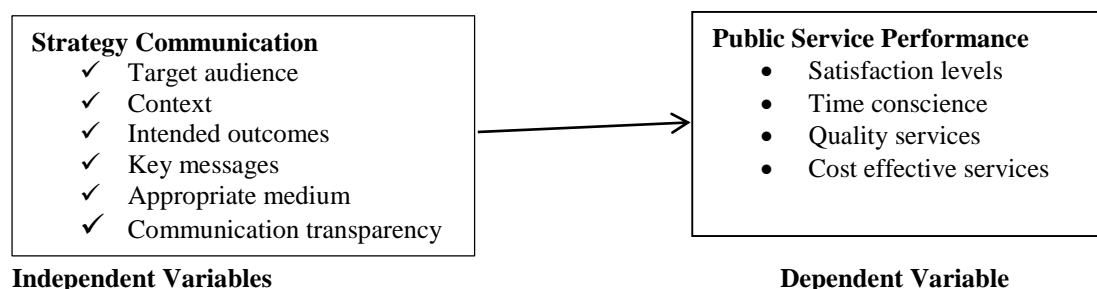


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Methods

The research design of the study involved descriptive survey methodology. The fundamental element of review looks into configuration to portray particular qualities of a substantial gathering of people, items or foundations, through polls. This design was appropriate for collecting information once in time over several groups of individuals. The descriptive research design reports gathers information with target of the end goal objective to answer inquiries concerning current status of the subject of the investigation (Orodho, 2013).

Target Population

The study target populations were human resource managers, administrators, ICT officers, Accountants, Finance officers and County Secretaries from all the county governments in the north rift region of Kenya. In total they was 720 respondents. The North rift region counties include Uasin Gishu, Nandi, Elgeyo-Marakwet, Trans Nzoia, Baringo, West-Pokot, Turkana and Samburu Counties.

Table 3.1 Target population

Strata	Population in 8 counties	Total population
Human resource managers	15*8	120
Administrators	7*8	56
ICT officers	20*8	160
Accountants	32*8	256
Finance officers	15*8	120
County Secretaries	1*8	8
Members of Public	90*8	720
Total	180*8	1440

Sampling Frame

Sampling frame refers to all the items in population under the examination. It's a complete list of everyone or everything you want to study (Mason, 2017). The study focused on 1440 respondents from the County Governments of North Rift Region.

Sample size and Sampling Technique

Sample refers to the number of observations or replicates to include in a statistical sample. Sampling technique refers to a procedure of selecting a part of population on which research can be conducted, which ensures that conclusions from the study can be generalized to the entire population (Brown,

2004). The appropriate sample size in a study depends on factors like the nature of the population to be studied, the purpose of the study, the number of variables in the study, the type of research design, the method of data analysis and the size of the accessible population (Churchill, 2004). The sample size of this study was drawn using Krejcie & Morgan, 1970 formula for finite population which is calculated as under:

$$S = \frac{X^2NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)}$$

Where:

S = Required Sample size

X = Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

N = Population Size (960)

P = Population proportion (expressed as decimal) (assumed to be 0.5 (50%))

d = Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (.05); It is margin of error

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 * 1440 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)}{0.05^2 * (1440-1) + 1.96^2 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{1382.976}{4.5579}$$

Therefore sample size was 303

This study therefore sampled 303 respondents from 10 ministries and the members of public in each of the 8 counties of the north rift region under the study.

The sampled size was represented in table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2 the sample size

Strata	Sampling	Sample size
Human resource managers	120/1440*303	25
Administrators	56/1440*303	12
ICT experts	160/1440*303	34
Accountants	256/1440*303	53
Finance officers	120/1440*303	25
County Secretaries	8/1440*303	2
Members of Public	720/1440*303	152
Total	1440/1440*303	303

The population was stratified into a number of non-overlapping strata and sample items are selected from each stratum. Stratified random sampling method was done according to the structure of the county ministries and members of public. The first stratum was made up of the administrators such as permanent secretaries and chief executive officers of the county ministries while the second stratum constituted the other senior employees within the County Governments of North Rift Region Kenya. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 25 human resource managers, 12 administrators, 34 ICT experts, 53 Accountants, 41 finance officers and 2 County Secretaries because they have specific information concerning influence of strategy translation on public service performance within the County Government of North Rift Region. The study used convenient sampling technique to select members of public. This technique was used because the researcher relies on available members of public within the study area.

Data collection instruments

The researcher used questionnaire as the main data collection instrument. The questionnaire contained both open and close-ended questions. An open-ended questionnaire gave the respondent freedom to

express their opinion freely by filing in the questions asked. Alternatively a close-ended questionnaire gave respondents choices of statements which they were to tick appropriately basing the study assessment. The main instrument of data collection was a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire.

The study used questionnaire with five sections. Information on demographic data on gender, age bracket, education and number of years of service in the organization was recorded in the first section while the information intended to be collected on data describing the sample characteristics basing the opinions of the respondents was recorded in the other sections. The section therefore sought the information on the influence of strategy implementation practices on public service performance in County Government of North Rift Region, Kenya. Responses was rated on a 5-point Likert Scale for which 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Undecided, 2-Disagree and 1-Strongly Disagree. The respondents was given three areas which included the influence of strategy articulation on public service performance, the influence of strategy communication on public service performance and the influence of strategy translation on public service performance.

Members of public who have received the services in county offices and heading home were approached to participate in the study by the researcher. The researcher was located in a position where he/she can see the members of public coming from the county offices heading to the gate where he/she can approach and explain to them about the study. County government employees were approached in their offices to participate in the study during their free time of the day.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection involves selecting subjects and gathering information from them. The process delineates the steps involved in data collection with regard to a specific study and depending on the research design and method of measurement (Burns and Grove, 2012). The primary data is data collected by using techniques like interviews and questionnaires while secondary data refers to sources like literature, articles and documents that have been collected by another researcher or institution. This study collected primary data using semi structured questionnaires which comprised open and closed ended questionnaires, closed ended questions required respondents to fill the questionnaires on their own after making some necessary clarifications so as to get their full consent while open ended questions were used where explanation and personal opinion were sought. This study utilized a questionnaire to collect primary data as used in various previous research projects and documented information (Dess, 2011). The questionnaire designed in this study comprised of two sections.

The study used a survey questionnaire administered to each member of the sample population. The questionnaire had close-ended questions. The close-ended questions provided more structured responses to facilitate tangible recommendations. Secondary data was also collected for this study. This data was useful for generating additional information for the study from already documented data or available reports. Cooper and Schindler (2010) further explain that secondary data is a useful quantitative technique for evaluating historical or contemporary confidential or public records, reports, government documents and opinions. Mugenda and Mugenda (2010) add that, numerical records can also be considered a subcategory of documents and those records include figures, reports and budgets. This basically implies the incorporation of valuable statistical data in the study.

Pilot Study

In order to ascertain validity and reliability of the research instruments, the researcher piloted research instruments in County Government of Nakuru, which was not be part of the target population of this study. The pilot respondents represented 10% of the sample size according to (Johanson, 2010). The results of the piloted research instruments enabled the researcher to determine the consistency of responses to be made by respondents and adjust the items accordingly by revising the document. The study used content validity to validate questionnaires for the study which is usually subjective thorough and the research instruments.

Validity

To test validity, the research instruments to be used in the study was availed to the supervisors and other specialized lecturers in the field of study in the School to review the test items to ensure that they are based on the content area before commencing on the real data collection. The researcher also sought the opinion of individuals who can render intelligent judgment about their adequacy (Sayer, 2011). The researcher therefore gave to the supervisor and other research experts to ensure that the questions test or measure what they are supposed to measure.

Reliability

Data collected from the pilot study was used to compute the reliability of the instruments' items. The Cronbach's alpha was applied on the results obtained to determine how items correlate among themselves in the same instrument. Cronbach's Alpha of more than 0.7 was taken as the cut off value for being acceptable which enhanced the identification of the dispensable variables and deleted variables. The test retest method was used to estimate the reliability of the research instruments. This involves administering the same test twice to the group of the respondents who have been identified for the research study purpose.

Data Processing and Analysis

The purpose of data analysis was to describe, discuss, evaluate and explain the content and characteristics of the data that has been collected in a research study. After all data has been collected, the researcher conducted data cleaning, which involved identification of incomplete or inaccurate responses and correct to improve the quality of the responses. The data was coded and entered in the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research yielded quantitative data. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Both

descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data. In descriptive statistics, means, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages was used. While in inferential statistics, regression model was used.

The regression equation is outlined as follows;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{Equ. 1}$$

Where:

Y= public service performance

β_0 = constant

X_1 = Strategy communication

ϵ = Error term

β_1 = Régression coefficient of Independent variable.

4.0 Findings and Discussions

Response Rate

The study response rate was 277 questionnaires out 303 questionnaires that were filled well while the rest had errors and the study rejected. This

represented 91.4% response rate and according to Bable (1995) the response rate of 70 percent and above is satisfactory to conduct adequate data analysis.

Background Information

The background information of respondents was examined and the following was part of respects tested; the gender of the response, the age of the response, the working experience of the respondents and finally the level of education of the respondents.

Gender of the respondents

The study findings on the gender of the respondents showed that 57.8% of the respondents were male while 42.2% of the respondents were female. This implies that the study respected theta third gender rule of the constitution and it was not bias to the gender balance. This is shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Gender of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	160	57.8
Female	117	42.2
Total	277	100

Age of the respondents

The study findings on the age of the respondents showed that 33.9% of the respondents were 30 years and below, 32.5% of the respondents were between 30 to 39 years, 11.9% of the respondents were

between 40 to 49 years and the remaining 21.7% of the respondents were 50 years and over. This is shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Age of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
30 years and below	94	33.9
Between 30-39 years	90	32.5
Between 39-49 years	33	11.9
Over 49 years	60	21.7
Total	277	100

Work experience of the respondents

The study findings on work experience of the respondents showed that 32.1% of the respondents had worked between 0-5 years, 44.8% of the respondents had worked between 5 to 10 years and 23.1% of the respondents had worked for 10 to 15

years. The study showed that respondents provided accurate information because they had enough experience in their field of work. This is shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Work experience of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
0-5 years	89	32.1
Above 5-10 years	124	44.8
Above 10-15 years	64	23.1
Total	277	100

Level of education of the respondents

The study findings on the level of education showed that 39.7% of the respondents were certificate graduate, 22.4% of the respondents were diploma graduate, 18.4% of the respondents had masters',

3.2% of the respondents had PhD and finally 10.5% of the respondents did not specified their education level. The study results were reliable since majority of the respondents were educated.

Table 4.4 Level of education of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	110	39.7
Diploma	62	22.4
Degree	51	18.4
Masters	9	3.2
Ph.D	16	5.8
Others	29	10.5
Total	277	100

Descriptive Findings and Discussions

Descriptive findings and discussions of the study objectives are illustrated in this section. The study findings are presented in measures of central tendencies which is the means and measures of variation or dispersion which is the standard deviations. The statistical analyses of the collected data were presented in five-point Likert scale as follows;

Strategy Communication

The study sought to determine the influence of strategy communication on public service performance in County Government of North Rift Region, Kenya. The study findings on the influence of strategy communication on public service performance indicated that respondents agreed (mean ≈ 4.76 ; Std dev. > 0.866) that strategic communication is directed at a specific audience in order to deliver the correct information to correct audience. Over recent decades, the strategic communication role have become more important from a lower base, but its augmented rather than displaced the process role, with the rise of public management interest in democratic deliberation, public participation, consultation, information-sharing and similar artifacts of democratic politics. Increasingly, public managers find themselves as initiators or responders, organizers, shapers, information-providers, advocates or devil's advocates in public deliberation processes (Bryson, 2018). The study also revealed that respondents admitted (mean ≈ 4.77 ; Std dev > 0.736) that the context of communication defines your audiences' world, recent experiences and reasonable

expectations for the future. Communication has remain to be the strongest weapon to deliver the desired information and its prolonged effect has an outstanding changes to the desired audience. Further respondents agreed (mean ≈ 4.64 ; std dev > 0.944) that there is an action people who need to know, believe, and do as a result of our communication. In respect to the findings people act according to the information shared and directed to them. Appropriate strategy communication has a big influence to the employee, consumers and the directors of the preferred institutions.

In other statements respondents admitted (mean ≈ 4.74 ; std dev > 0.777) that the messages you communicate usually determine the most effective media to employ. The target group on media are given specific information therefore the choice of media is relative to the message that is desired to reach the target group. Finally, respondents agreed (mean ≈ 4.67 ; std dev > 0.884) that transparency on strategic communication on management practices has brought a lot of achievements to the County Government of North Rift Region. The county governments in the north rift region has made a great achievement by choice to serve citizens with transparenance that has enhance improved public service performance. Sefali and Bekker (2010) mentioned that communication ensures accountability in the public service is enhanced to meet the concept of a performance management system (PMS) in dynamic and controversial institutions. It has a variety of contexts, forms and purposes as applied and perceived internationally.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Strategy Communication

		S	D	U	A	SA	Total	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
	D			D							
Strategic communication is directed at a specific audience in order to deliver the correct information to correct audience.	F	10	5	3	6	253	277	4.76	0.866	1	5
	%	3.6	1.8	1.1	2.2	91.3	100				
The context of communication defines your audiences' world, recent experiences and reasonable expectations for the future.	F	4	7	5	17	244	277	4.77	0.735	1	5
	%	1.4	2.5	1.8	6.1	88.1	100				
There is an action people need to know, believe, and do as a result of our communication.	F	10	3	22	7	235	277	4.64	0.944	1	5
	%	3.6	1.1	7.9	2.5	84.8	100				
The messages you communicate usually determine the most effective media to employ.	F	3	11	6	14	243	277	4.74	0.777	1	5
	%	1.1	4.0	2.2	5.1	87.7	100				
Transparency on strategic communication on management practices has brought a lot of achievements to the County Government of North Rift Region.	F	7	7	14	15	234	277	4.67	0.884	1	5
	%	2.5	2.5	5.1	5.4	84.5	100				

Public service performance

The study sought to determine the influence of strategy implementation practices on public service performance in County Government of North Rift Region, Kenya. Table 4.8, *page 45* presents' views of the respondents on the descriptive statistics for public service performance.

The study findings on public service performance revealed that respondents opined (mean \approx 4.74; std dev $>$ 0.812) that public service performance has increased public satisfaction. The improved public service performance strategies has made the county governments realize the need of efficiency in service delivery to its citizens. The governments has achieved notable changes through public participation on county affairs. The study also agreed (mean \approx 4.69; std dev $>$ 0.891) that the county government management services are usually delivered on a timely basis. In line to the government management services, residents have

received improved performance from the counties facilities despite constrains that hinder smooth service delivery. In the other hand the study revealed (mean \approx 4.59; std dev $>$ 0.965) that the county government providers' quality services to its customers in service delivery.

Quality service has been the great desire to every institution within the county facilities, and now the county is injecting more resources to ensure that citizens are receiving the desired quality of services. Finally the study indicated (mean \approx 4.65; std dev $>$ 1.037) that services provided by the county government are cost effective in the cost of procedures followed and products obtained. This implies that the county government has adopted convenient ways of assessing the services by the citizens, it has reduced the procedural acquisition of service from the specified institutions. Ministries now days for example provide services within the short time and that no longer require long ques.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for public service performance

			SD	D	UD	A	SA	Total	Mean	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Public service performance has increased public satisfaction.	F	6	7	7	14	243	277	4.74	0.812	1	5	
	%	2.2	2.5	2.5	5.1	87.7	100					
The county government management services are usually delivered on a timely basis.	F	9	6	8	16	238	277	4.69	0.891	1	5	
	%	3.2	2.2	2.9	5.8	85.9	100					
The county government provides quality services to its customers in service delivery.	F	11	7	8	32	219	277	4.59	0.965	1	5	
	%	4	2.5	2.9	11.6	79.1	100					
Services provided by the county government are cost effective in the cost of procedures followed and products obtained.	F	15	6	9		247	277	4.65	1.037	1	5	
	%	5.4	2.2	3.2		89.2	100					

Findings of Inferential Statistics

Correlation analysis

The study applied Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation for the purpose of checking whether there is linear association between the variables. Table 4.9 shows the Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation of bivariate correlations between the study variables that include strategy articulation, strategy communication, and strategy translation and public service performance. The study used a single construct in the questionnaire that was measured by multiple items, the average score of the multi-items for a construct was computed and used in further analysis such as correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis.

The range values of Karl Pearson's coefficient indicate that when values (r) ranges from 0.10-0.29, it is considered to be weak correlation, when values ranges from 0.30-0.49 it is considered medium, when values ranges from 0.5-1.0 it is considered strong according to Wong and Hiew (2005). It was revealed that strategy articulation is a positively and statistically significant ($r=0.304$, $p=0.000$), strategy communication is positively and statistically significant ($r=0.466$, $p=0.00$) and strategy translation is positively and statistically significant ($r=0.199$, $p=0.000$). This depicts that all the study variables: strategy articulation, strategy communication and strategy translation were correlated to public service performance and were positively and statistically significant.

Table 4.9 Correlations Analysis between the dependent and independent variables

		strategy communication	public service performance
strategy communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.466**
public service performance	Pearson Correlation	.466**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Test of Hypothesis

Table 4.10 show coefficient of correlation coefficient (R) and determination (R^2) which explains the degree of association between strategy communication and public service performance. The model summary indicated that $R = 0.466$ and $R^2 = 0.217$. R value gives an indication that there is a

linear association between strategy communication and public service performance. The R^2 indicates that explanatory power of the independent variables is 0.217. This means that about 21.7 percent of the variation in public service performance is explained by the strategy communication.

Table 4.10 Model Summary of Strategy Communication and public service performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.466	.217	.215	.49845

Table 4.11 of ANOVA test on the articulation objective for the regression F test provides a specific test of significance of the fitted regression model. The F value indicates that the variable in the equation is important hence regression is significant. The F-statistics produced ($F = 76.433$) which was significant at $p=0.000$ thus confirms the fitness of

the model. Therefore, there is statistically significant association between strategy communication and public service performance at County Governments in North Rift Region, Kenya. This means that the independent variable (strategy communication) is a significant predictor of the dependent variable (public service performance).

Table 4.11 ANOVA of Strategy communication and public service performance

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.990	1	18.990	76.433	.000
	Residual	68.323	275	.248		
	Total	87.313	276			

Table 4.12 shows a paired sample correlations which revealed that a strategy communication variable was helpful indicator that explained the public service performance. By using regression analysis the study found that with a constant public service

performance of 3.452 a unit change in strategy communication causes a 0.466 increase in public service performance in standardized coefficient and 0.294 in unstandardized coefficients.

Table 4.12 Regression Analysis of Strategy communication and public service performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.452	.158		21.911	.000
Strategy communication	.294	.077	.466	8.743	.000

Table 4.13 show coefficient of correlation coefficient (R) and determination (R^2) which explains the degree of association between strategy translation and public service performance. The model summary indicated that $R = 0.199$ and $R^2 = 0.040$. R value gives an indication that there is a linear association between strategy translation and public service performance. The R^2 revealed that the explanatory power of the public service performance is 0.040. This means that about 4.0 percent of the variation in public service performance is explained by the strategy translation.

Overall regression analysis

Table 4.14 show coefficient of correlation coefficient (R) and determination (R^2) which explains the degree of association between strategy implementation practices and public service performance. The overall model summary indicated that $R = 0.501$ and $R^2 = 0.521$. R value gives an indication that there is a linear association between strategy implementation practices and public service performance. The R^2 revealed that the explanatory power of the public service performance is 0.521. This means that about 52.1 percent of the variation in public service performance (dependent variable) is explained by the strategy implementation practices (independent variable).

Table 4.14 Model Summary between strategy communication and public service performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.501	.521	.243	.48936

Table 4.15 of ANOVA test on the regression F test provides an overall test of significance of the fitted regression model. The F value indicates that the variable in the equation is important hence regression is significant. The F-statistics produced (F=30.527) which was significant at $p=0.000$ thus confirms the fitness of the model. Therefore, there is

statistically significant association between strategy implementation practices and public service performance at County Governments in North Rift Region, Kenya. This means that the independent variable is a significant predictor of the dependent variable.

Table 4.16 ANOVA between strategy communication and public service performance

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.938	3	7.313	30.537	.000
	Residual	65.375	273	.239		
	Total	87.313	276			

Table 4.17, shows the overall linear regression analysis which indicated that the regression values of all the independent variables (strategy articulation, strategy communication and strategy translation) were significant. This means that all the postulated hypotheses were not supported. Hence, the strategy communication $\beta=0.389$, $p<0.05$ are predictor variables for strategy implementation practices on public service performance of County Governments in North Rift Region, Kenya.

The regression equation is outlined as follows;

$$Y = 2.283 + 0.389X_1$$

Table 4.17 Coefficients of strategy communication public service performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.283	.372		6.134	.000
Strategy communication	.245	.036	.389	6.850	.000

5.0 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

Strategy Communication

Strategic communication is directed at a specific audience in order to deliver the correct information to correct audience. The findings concurred that over the recent decades, the strategic communication role have become more important from a lower base, but its augmented rather than displaced the process role, with the rise of public management interest in democratic deliberation, public participation, consultation, information-sharing and similar artifacts of democratic politics. Communication have remained to be the strongest weapon to deliver the desired information and its prolonged effect has an outstanding changes to the desired audience. Further the messages you communicate usually determine the most effective media to employ. The target group on media are given specific information

Where:

Y represents public service performance, dependent variable

β_0 represents constant

X_2 represents strategy communication

The regression coefficients of the independent variables; strategy communication are statistically significant in explaining strategy implementation practices on public service performance of County Governments in North Rift Region of Kenya.

therefore the choice of media is relative to the message that is desired to reach the target group.

Conclusion

Strategy communication creates the context that defines the audiences which earns reasonable expectations during service delivery. Transparency on strategic communication on management practices has brought a lot of achievements to the County Government of North Rift Region. The county governments in the north rift region have made a great achievement by choice to serve citizens with transparency that has enhance improved public service performance. Communication ensures accountability in the public service and it has enhanced to meet the concept of performance management system (PMS) in dynamic and controversial institutions. It has a variety of contexts, forms and purposes as applied and perceived internationally.

The study findings concur institutional Theory developed by Powell and DiMaggio in 1991 because the theory explains how institutions set out in an organization determine what is acceptable and whatever that is not acceptable in an organizational setting. This therefore determines how employees carry themselves around when doing their duties. This theory was important for this study because it helps explain the role played by policies, procedures, laws and other internal restrictions on strategy implementation.

Recommendations

The study recommends to the county ministry through the chief executive officers to ensure that there is a good strategic articulation over the implementation practices because this enhances improvement of public service performance.

The study recommends to employees of the county governments' on how improving service delivery by implementing the best strategies which enhances county government performance.

Finally the study recommends to the county government ministry chief executive officers to

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regulate management skills of the county employees since good management from leaders immensely contributes to strategy translation in public service performance.

The study recommends the use of institutional Theory in setting out what is acceptable and whatever that is not acceptable in an organizational setting. This helps in determining how employees carry themselves around when doing their duties. It will also help to explain the role played by policies, procedures, laws and other internal restrictions on strategy implementation.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study has achieved to determine the influence of strategy implementation practices on public service performance of County Governments in North Rift Region, Kenya. Therefore the study suggests further research to be done on how to implement the best strategies which enhances county government performance. Further research should also look at how leaderships affect strategic implementation and how it contributes to strategy translation in public service performance.

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